IS LIFE WORTH LIVING?

Is life worth living? Yes, so long
As spring revives the year,
And hails us with the cuckoo's song
To show that she is here;
So long as May of April takes,
In smiles and tears, farewell,
And windflowers dapple all the brakes,
And primroses the dell;
While children in the woodlands yet
Adorn their little laps
With ladysmock and violet,
And daisy-chain their caps;
While over orchard daffodils
Cloud shadows float and fleet,
And ouzel pipes and laverock trills
And young lambs buck and bleat;
So long as that which bursts the bud
And swells and tunes the rill
Makes springtime in the maiden's blood,
Life is worth living still.

—Alfred Austin.

HOLDING ...A... DOLLY-BAR.

By ALBERT W. TOLMAN.

In the early winter twilight that brooded over the vast, sooty, floorless shop of the bridgebuilders a dozen men were fastening a steel span. From a furnace glowing in a dusky corner a grimy Swede, with long-handled tongs, continually plucked forth red-hot rivets. These he flirted in fiery twenty-foot parabolas to a comrade, who deftly caught them in a scoop, whence they were removed by the rivet tender and inserted, all glowing, in their respective holes, to be driven into place and shape.

It was the scoop-man who told me this story that night in his home, after his day's work was over.

"In July, 1895," said he, "I was working on a steel-framed sky-scraper in one of our large coast cities. We had reached the eighth story and as the floors were somewhat more than ten feet apart, the top beams were well up in the air.

"One afternoon I was inside an elevator well between the seventh and eighth stories, fastening the guide to the sheet-steel wall. One of the other sides was also covered with steel, but the other two were open. Charley Hoff, 'Dutch Charley' we called him, was driving rivets outside the wall, while I held the 'dolly' to head up the inner ends.

"This particular dolly was a round steel bar three feet long, weighing about fifty pounds. From its top ran a chain ending in a hook, which I had caught over the top of the wall a few feet above, so that the bar hung suspended against the guide, and all I had to do was to hold it against the rivet ends as they came through.

"At half past eleven we reached a set of holes six feet above the seventh floor. To get at these I was obliged to sit upon a board supported by two tall wooden horses, standing on planks laid across the shaft and forming a loose scaffolding. Through its openings I could look down clear to the basement, more than seventy feet below. Behind me, on the opposite side of the shaft, were lashed short perpendicular ladders, up and down which the men were constantly passing, for the elevator well was the main thoroughfare of the huge steel skeleton.

"I found that the holes would have to be reamed out before they would receive the rivets, so I told Dutch he needn't drive any more till after dinner. Meanwhile I went to work with my reamer, and by twelve had nearly finished.

"Noon struck. In less than a minute the ladders were covered with men climbing down. There were a lot of 'twelve-o'clock' fellows on the job, who would rather leave a bolt half-driven than work a second overtime. A gang right over me had just put a heavy steel 'header' in place on the edge of steel 'header' in place on the edge of driven into one end, but the other was as yet unfastened. It would have taken only a few minutes at the most to make everything secure; but at the first stroke of the hour they dropped their tools and hurried to dinner.

"I paid no especial attention to them, for I was putting the finishing turns on the last hole. By the time it was done there was not another man left on the building. I had been sitting in the middle of the board, facing the wall about eighteen inches off. Now I laid down my reamer, and started to hitch myself along toward one of the horses, so that I might descend.

"A sudden strong hot wind swept through the frame, making the loose planks rattle. Something grated above my head. I looked up and for a moment my blood stopped running. The gust had struck the nicely balanced header with just enough force to make it totter. Slowly its loose and swung downward; then it lurched quickly, and slid into the well!

"As it dropped it just cleared my head. It sheared through the middle of the scaffolding as if the thick planks were rotten paper. Down it shot gaining momentum with every foot, its lower end raking the opposite wall clean of ladders.

"Smash! Bang! Grind! All was over in a few seconds. Dust rose. And when the turmoil had subsided there was I, sitting on my board with seventy-five feet of empty air between me and the debris at the bottom of the well.

"For a brief space I sat motionless, gripping the wood with my fingers, too dazed for thought. Then I looked cautiously over into the abyss. Far below I could see a jumble of splintered timbers, like a heap of broken jackstraws, with the header sticking straight up out of their center.

"I shuddered as I thought of what would now be lying under that mass had the catastrophe occurred five minutes before, when the ladders were filled with men. Then, as I raised my eyes from the pit, I saw something that made me turn cold.

"The falling header had taken out the middle of the scaffolding, leaving only the side planks on which the horses stood. The shock had moved one of these planks two or three inches, so that a leg of the horse upon it just overhung the edge. A little more and the horse would topple into the shaft, taking its support from the board on which I sat and hurling me down to a frightful death.

"I was practically glued to my place. If I tried to reach either horse, the chances were that I should jar the leg clear. My only safety consisted in keeping absolutely quiet.

"In front rose the steel wall, with the dolly hanging against it. The smooth metal offered no handhold. Could I have stood upright and been sure of firm footing, I might have risked a leap to the beams of the next floor; but any attempt to gain my feet on that ticklish board would invite the very disaster I dreaded.

"I knew that I had been seen and my peril understood. The building was on a crowded business street, and the crash of the falling beam had attracted the attention of hundreds of people. A great silent throng soon blocked all traffic. I could see their upturned faces and an occasional pointed finger. Their very stillness terrified me, for I knew that it was my mortal danger that held them spellbound.

"It was extremely hot. The sun beat down fiercely. My head was protected only by a light cap and the heat set my brain boiling. The great iron framework, with its white figures and letters painted on the beams to show their dimensions and places, swam dizzily round me. I closed my eyes, but got little relief. A warm red light glowed before them. I seemed to be swaying regularly to and fro. Actually, I was as nearly motionless as fright could make me, but to my reeling head I seemed to be oscillating like a pendulum.

"A blast of wind passed through the skeleton frame, jarring me slightly. I looked down toward the leg of the horse. It had certainly moved a trifle. Another blast might dislodge it altogether. I sickened with terror.

The crowd below appreciated my danger. A quick, convulsive gasp of pity rose to me from hundreds of throats.

"But there was one in that throng who did something more than sympathize. He was a sailor on shore leave from a United States battleship in the harbor. Running into a store he obtained a hundred feet of new, strong rope, looped it about his shoulders and began to clamer toward me. As there were no ladders left he was forced to swarm up the steel uprights.

"At first, however, I did not see him, for close to me something happened that drove everything else from my mind.

"A barely perceptible movement fastened my eyes on the leg of the horse. Painfully scrutinizing the spot where it rested, I saw that the plank was being pushed slowly but surely along by the lateral pressure of the other legs. I watched it fascinated. It was only a question of a very short time when I should be hurled into the pit.

"Suddenly, three stories below, I saw a man climbing toward me. He was dressed in a blue suit and a flat cap edged with white letters. A coil of rope hung around his neck. Up he came like a monkey, arms, legs, hands, feet, all doing their part. Would he be in time to save me? He was a swarthy, Spanish-looking fellow, not very tall, with black moustache and good-natured face. Two stories below his cap dropped off, revealing his thick curly hair. Several times he slipped back slightly, and I noticed the dull red smears on his clothing from the freshly painted beams.

"I watched him tensely. He glanced up and caught my eye.

"'Cheer up, mate!' he exclaimed. 'I'll have a rope round you in a jiffy!'

"Another slight movement of the plank. I groaned. The bluejacket heard me, and it stimulated him to do his utmost. It was a race between him and the retreating wood. On his lithe muscles my life depended.

"The leg now hung on its support by the merest fraction of its width. It might slip off at any second. I no longer saw the sailor. The sound of his climbing and his heavy breathing came to me, but I did not dare to turn my head.

"I closed my lids for an instant. When I opened them the leg was entirely off the plank. The horse tipped and the board under me tilted downward.

"I gave one last despairing glance at the steel wall and at the dolly suspended by its chain. Could those small, rusted links support one hundred and eighty pounds more? The thought flashed into my brain. There was no time for debating. As the board dropped from under me, I flung out my hands and twined my fingers round the chain with the grip of death.

"Over the top of the wall four feet above appeared the bluejacket's anxious face.

"'Quick!' I screamed.

"'Catch hold!' shouted he, and down on my head dropped a loop of rope. As I clutched it with one hand, a link in the chain pulled out, and the fifty-pound bar shot down to the bottom of the well. Two minutes later I lay safe on the working-platform above. Then everything turned black.

"When I came to myself, I was lying on a bench in the tool shanty. One of my friends was dousing me with cold water, while others were grouped round; but the sailor, to whose coolness and dexterity I owed my life, was nowhere to be seen. He had fastened the rope under my arms, and lowered me down insensible. Then he had descended, picked up his cap and disappeared.

"I never see a bluejacket without thinking of the one who saved my life, and that is why I have always had a warm place in my heart for the sailors of the United States navy.—Youth's Companion.

TEA FROM THE FLOWERS.

Naturally Sweet Tea of Western China—Value of Tea Dust.

Tea, not from the leaves, but from the flowers alone of the plant, is rarely encountered in commerce. The petals, stamens, etc., are sun dried, and the resulting tea is of a rich, deep brown hue of peculiarly delicate odor, and gives a pale amber colored infusion rather more astringent in taste than that from the average fair grade leaf. The taste for it is an acquired one, and even if this tea could be made commercially posible it is doubtful if it would ever become popular.

The American sea trade could advantageously take a suggestion from the brick tea of the Far East. In our country, the tea dust, some of which is of good quality, is not properly utilized. In Europe it is a regular article of trade, and it is advertised and sold as tea dust. In America it is sold to thousands of cheap restaurants, who make from it the mixture of tannic acid, sugar and boiled milk which they sell as "tea." If, as in the Orient, this dust were compressed into bricks, good tea could be made from it, and the product would find a ready market through the multitude of uses for which it is adapted. A beginning in this direction has been made by the Pinehurst tea estate in South Carolina, and in Europe similar advances have been inaugurated.

The virgin tea (biepjcki-chi), so called from its use at Chinese weddings, is the sun dried leaf intact, tied up with three strands of colored silk. After infusion, these fagotlike little bundles are pickled in vinegar and used as salad. This tea is sold in especially handsome silk covered and glass topped boxes. The rarest of all teas, and one that has never been known to reach this country, is a naturally sweet tea, produced in western China on a very limited scale. Its culture is centuries old, and the secret has been jealously guarded from generation to generation. The saccharinity is probably due to grafting and years of patient study and care, such as only the small Chinese tea farmer is capable of bestowing.—Scientific American.

Teachers Must Be Home by 9.

The school board has applied the curfew law to school teachers of Muskogee. From Tulsa and McAlester comes information that the school board at each place has made a similar order.

The boards of education in these towns have decided that the teachers in the public schools must cut society five nights out of the week at least. The boards have given it out that they do not expect to see the teachers out after 9 o'clock at night through the school week and they do not add that the teachers are at liberty the other nights. This order has created a storm in the towns mentioned. Some of the teachers are in open rebellion and say that they will go where they please and when, and some of them have done so, but it is noticed they are waiting with some apprehension for the next meeting of the board.—Muskogee correspondence Kansas City Star.

Angels on the Rand.

Years ago a trained nurse was deemed nothing short of an angel on the Rand. A guinea a day was too poor a recompense for her labor of love; the patient's life and worldly goods were invariably cast at her feet. In many instances she picked it all up, and was happy ever after. Five guineas a week is still the competent nurse's fee.—London South Africa.

There is no longer any opposition manifested by Thibetans to traders, who are now passing freely between Calcutta and Lhasa.

MILLIONS IN PARIS REFUSE

ELABORATE SYSTEM OF UNOFFICIAL SALVAGING.

The Only Thing That's No Good When Worn Out is Paper Money—Transmogrifications of Old Shoes—Post-Mortem Glories of the Rabbits and Hares.

The housekeepers of Paris throw away $10,000 worth of usable stuff daily or nearly $6,000,000 worth a year; but not a dollar of it is lost. No city of its size in the world has so thorough a salvage system.

A few years ago, when the municipality first adopted an ordinance requiring the use of metal garbage receptacles, the unofficial salvage corps rose in revolt. Then the discovery was made than 40,000 citizens depended for their livelihood upon the refuse of the city.

Their rights were recognized. It was arranged that the chiffoniers, as they call the people who dig through the receptacles, should do so indoors in the early mornings before the city wagons came around to collect the garbage.

They forthwith divided the field among themselves. Each one took possession of a territory. There is no law covering the matter, but the territories came to be regarded as vested rights. They are sold nowadays as a doctor sells his practice, and they fetch from $10 to perhaps $60, depending on the wealth of the quarter. Of course they are not freeholds. Rent or commission is paid in one way or another.

In poor neighborhoods the chiffonier puts the garbage cans out on the sidewalk, thus saving the concierge from having to get out of bed in the chilly dawn to do so. In houses where the pickings are good a few francs a week may have to be paid here and there to hold the circuit.

The chiffonier of today has a cart and sometimes a bony nag to draw it. Sometimes he and his wife draw it—or maybe the wife alone. He has besides a hovel and a yard somewhere out in the grimiest suburbs. This is where he assorts his gatherings in the forenoon, for sale later in the day to the wholesalers.

First of all he sets aside scraps of food for his own use. To a magazine writer who showed disgust at this one of them struck back.

"Don't curl your lips,' said he, "you don't know what you eat sometimes yourself. See these crusts? They were a heap of bread crusts in all stages of diplapidation. These are crusts that my horse won't eat. I sell them to the pork dealers at half a cent a pound. They are roasted in a coffee roaster, granulated in a mill and then used to sprinkle on the top of hams, where they are baked into a nice brown crust.

"The pork man sells the black dust that falls from the mill to the charcoal tooth powder makers and the coffee grinders, or you may get it as prime chicory."

There was also a great vessel full of coffee grounds.

"I have a customer," said the chiffonier, who dries them and regrinds them with 5 percent of fresh coffee, some browned rye and a little burned sugar. They they're ready for packing in cartons for retail sale. They make excellent coffee."

In another bag there was a collection of heads of game birds, pheasants, partridges, pigeons, reed, birds.

"I sell them at three cents each to second class restaurants," was the explanation. "When you get a salmi of duck or a game pie goodness knows what odds and ends it is made of, but it will be served with one or two of my figureheads decorating the dish as an evidence of good faith."

One of the most profitable species of refuse is old shoes; nothing in them goes to waste. There are wholesalers who specialize in them.

They are carefully dissected. Wooden heels are sold for kindling. Soles are carefully detached from uppers and trimmed into new soles. A man's can be cut down to a woman's size, a woman's to a child's.

Some manufacturers make a specialty of these restorations. A new slab of leather makes them look all right outside, a thin lining is pasted over them inside. The manufactures pay the wholesalers a cent each for such soles. There are sixty wholesalers engaged in this trade; they employ from ten to a dozen men each at $1 a day. They produce, it is estimated, 500,000 soles a year.

The shoes are entirely taken apart. The nails, heeltaps and eyelets, if any, are allowed to fall on the floor. When they are swept up the iron is separated simply by applying strong magnets to the mass. It is sent to one smelter as scrap and the brass goes to another.

The useless leather scraps are sold to chemical work at Ivry, where they are converted into fertilizers. So sweeping is the salvage work of this industry that the parings of horses' hoofs from the blacksmiths' shops are collected to the extent of 600,000 pounds a year. The volume of leather scrap is estimated at 3,600,000 pounds.

From 40,000 to 50,000 pounds of bones daily are collected in yards in the suburbs, where they undergo a rigid examination. Men shovel them on a long endless belt of leather a couple of feet wide, which is kept running at a moderate speed over rollers. Five or six women are lined up beside it, and as the bones pass them they pounce with trained judgment upon those which have special value. The rest are automatically loaded on carts.

The bones which they select figure all over the world later as ivory. Buttons are cut from shoulderblades, also sticks for fanse. Marrow bones make pretty napkin rings, and pincushion frames without much work in the lathe. Cutlet bones are used for toothbrush handles.

The rejected bones are treated with benzine for the extraction of the fats. This becomes soap and candles. The bones themselves may be boiled up into gelatine and glue or calcined into boneblack.

Rabbit and hare are favorite delicacies in France. Every day, it is estimated, about 15,000 of their skins get into the hands of the furriers.

All are scrupulously cleaned and sterilized. These are shaved by machinery down to the very skin and the hair is made up into fine felt hats.

The rabbit or hare skin that is to figure as fur is treated with distinguished consideration. It is cured and softened. The pure white are picked out for ermine. All the others are dyed into chinchilla, otter or silver fox.

As the fur of these animals almost has a characteristic depth, the skins are passed through shaving machines which trim down the hair to the standard length, to a hundredth of an inch. It appears that the hare of no country equals that of France in its fitness for this sort of counterfeit. The best skins when made up can be detected only by experts.

Every year on the first four days of Holy Week the "Flea Fair" is held in Paris. At this 2000 brokers who buy from the chiffoniers install themselves for nearly two miles along the sidewalks of the Boulevard Richard-Lenoil and the Canal St. Martin.

There is nothing in the way of worn out metal work, broken furniture and old fabrics that cannot be found there on sale. They sell out their entire stock, too.

Of course, waste paper is sent to the paper mills from Paris as elsewhere—24,000 pounds of it daily at 20 cents a hundred pounds. Linen and cotton rags go the same way. Sardine boxes and other tins are sold by chiffoniers at 60 cents a hundred pounds and treated chemically for the sake of the tin.

The plates are hammered flat and used by the toy makers and makers of button moulds. Gilt china and glass fragments sell at 60 cents a hundred pounds. The gold is salvaged by chemical process.

Only one thing in Paris is totally useless when it reaches the refuse stage. That thing is paper money. It is true that the worn out money of the bank of France is ground into pulp like any other waste paper, but it is so greasy from handling that it would not pay to cleanse it for remanufacture.—New York Sun.

English Channel Tunnel.

The indifference of the Paris public toward the mercantile marine extends to the Channel tunnel question. There is absolutely no agitation in its favor, and, what is just as significant, some of the leading French newspapers have, in dealing with the subject, candidly acknowledged the force of the objections to the project. This is all the more noteworthy as our French friends would distinctly be greater gainers than the English by such a work. The argument that the tunnel would help on the entente cordiale and that the rejection of the plan might create an unfavorable impression on this side of the water is quite beside the mark. The entente cordiale needs no such stimulus and it cannot possibly be damped by any decision with regard to a matter in which the English are admittedly the best judges. From many remarks which are to be heard it seems perfectly clear that if the relative positions were reversed the French would not entertain such a project for a moment. They would know only too well the advantages of an insular position and the drawbacks of a land frontier to care to run any such risks.—Paris Correspondent of The London Telegraph.

Fireworks on the mainland, mistaken for signals of distress from sea, caused the lifeboat men of Totland bay, Isle of Wight, to spend four hours at sea in stormy weather.